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ABSTRACT

This study focused on Appalachian migrant children attending certain urban junior high schools in the Cincinnati, Ohio area. The primary source of data on the individual students was an interview combined with as much observation as possible during the interview. A profile of the urban Appalachian student was drawn from the data. Highlights include the following: the eighth grade Appalachian migrant student is approximately 13 and one-half years old and, like his parents, probably was born in a southern Appalachian county; he has attended at least two elementary schools prior to enrolling at the junior high level; both of his parents work, usually at some form of unskilled labor; his attitude toward the school can be described as neutral; he prefers those teachers and administrators who are friendly and personable; in turn, he will be open and friendly; if placed in a threatening or difficult situation by a student, teacher, or administrator he will tend to withdraw; he has average grades and attendance patterns; and, if he attends a school where there are blacks, he will not understand the blacks and will tend to keep to himself or to associate only with other white students. The study concludes that, as a student, he is little understood by his teachers, counselors, and administrators. (Author/JM)

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URBAN APPALACHIAN SCHOOL CHILDREN: THE LEAST UNDERSTOOD OF ALL

by

Thomas E. Wagner

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P R E F A C E

This paper is one in a series to be published by the Research Committee of the Urban Appalachian Council as part of our effort to document the urban and rural realities of Appalachian life.

In 1972, the Urban Appalachian Council was organized to act as a regional resource and educational center for Appalachian affairs and to promote pride in cultural heritage among Appalachians in an urban setting.

The Urban Appalachian Council functions as advocate and catalyst. It is a fundamental commitment to the concept of cultural pluralism which directs our work in research, advocacy, community organization, cultural affirmation and program development.

INTRODUCTION

Until he says something, he seems little different from other white students attending urban schools throughout the industrial midwest. But when he speaks, his accent or drawl identifies him as a "hillbilly," "ridgerunner," or "briar-hopper." He is an Appalachian migrant; perhaps the least understood of all the children attending urban schools.

Few urban institutions have as much influence upon the Appalachian child as does the school. But schools are institutions operated for and by the middle-class. Migrant Appalachians generally are not middle-class citizens, nor do they profess the attitude and value sets of middle-class society. Roscoe Giffin long ago pointed to the school as a major cause of the Appalachian child's dissatisfaction with urban life.

> They are a part of an educational system that is at the same time more complex and richer in opportunity yet more demanding of achievement and continued regular attendance than was their lot either in a small one-room school or in one of the newer consolidated schools. To complicate matters further they are the pupils to teachers who are likely to be products of urban, middle-class society.[1]

Urban schools, because they insist on shaping and molding pupils into a middle-class conformity, tend to neglect, retard, or drive out the migrant students. While the data may seem inconclusive, there is enough available to suggest that urban Appalachian students are less successful in school and have a higher drop-out rate than any other identifible group of urban students.[2]

Education can and, at time, does serve to improve the quality of life of urban citizens. Appalachians who benefit from urban schools, however,

do so in spite of, not because of, what happens in the classroom each day.

Unfortunately, educators often place the blame with the student rather than with the institution when discussing how schools have failed to meet the needs of urban minorities. As a rule, in conversations with teachers and administrators, an identifiable pattern of "Appalachian problems" soon emerges. The Appalachian's attitude toward education, a high degree of mobility, absenteeism, dropping-out, and language skills are the most often cited problems.[3]

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The general purpose of this research may be stated as a study of Appalachian migrant children attending certain urban junior high schools in the Cincinnati, Ohio area. A compilation of data through case studies of a selected but representative sample of migrant students was the specific objective. A profile of the Appalachian migrant student was developed from the data.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

When one begins to study the mountaineer in an urban environment, the severe lack of data and information becomes extremely evident. Little or no data are available on where in the city the Appalachian lives, works, goes to school, or how he spends his free time.[4] No census data exists on the number of Appalachians who live in the greater Cincinnati area, how often they return to the mountains, or how often they move from one Appalachian enclave in the city to another. With few exceptions, the studies of

Appalachian people deal with the rural mountain enrivonment. Those concerned with the urban environment rely on incomplete information and often what is written about the urban Appalachian is extrapolated from research on rural Appalachia. Unfortunately, there is more information available on certain primitive tribes in South America then on Appalachian migrants living in the greater Cincinnati area.

The schools were selected primarily on the basis of the student body composition. Cutter Junior High School, which draws students from the Over-the Rhine, an Appalachian "port-of-entry" neighborhood, has a student body that is 80% black and 20% white. Another "port-of-entry" neighborhood, Lower Price Hill, is served by Roberts Junior High School with a student body that is 99% white.[5] Norwood Junior High School has an all white student body with students from middle- and lower-class families. These three schools provide an economic and cultural cross-section of urban Appalachian junior high schools in the Cincinnati metropolitan area and, to a certain degree, reflect the community situation in which many urban Appalachian migrants find themselves; that is, relative social class isolation and/or a mixed racial situation.

The identification of Appalachian students--defined for the purpose of this study as students who were born or whose parents were born in a Southern Appalachian county--was the first step in the study process. The principals and/or counselors in each of the junior high buildings were asked to prepare a list of "Appalachian students." The only criteria for the list were that the students meet the definition of Appalachian as stated above and that they be in the eighth grade. The list of names for each school numbered between fifteen and thirty-seven. In several cases, particularly at Cutter, the student records were

incomplete, and it was difficult to determine definitely who was or was not born in an Appalachian county. Thus, several students were listed as "Appalachians" on the basis of their accent and manners or because the principal or counselor had personal knowledge of the student's family and background. Nine students from each list were chosen for interview, and twenty subsequently were chosen for case study.

In addition to interviewing students, the principal, several counselors, and many teachers in each school building were interviewed. The researcher also interviewed parents, local agency personnel, and community citizens. Two additional interviews were conducted with drop-outs attending a community school and a Learning Resource Center of the Model Cities Area. A total of 72, students, parents, teachers, principals, counselors, agency personnel, community citizens, interested professionals, and noted authorities on Appalachian life were interviewed. These interviews, conducted over a period of ten months, beginning in March, 1972, were held in schools, in homes, at conferences, in the mountains, on streets, or wherever individuals who knew mountaineers were willing to meet and talk with the writer.

The primary source of data on the individual students was the interview combined with a maximum of observation during the interview. Student cumulative records were reviewed after the interviews, but only as a means to verify information the student could not recall or to check for omission of data (e.g., students were asked the number of days they were absent from school the previous year and attendance records were consulted to verify the answers).

All of the initial contacts were made with a simple introduction and statement that the writer was "conducting a study of students attending Cincinnati area junior high schools and that your school has chosen you to participate in the study." Each student was asked if he or she wished to participate; none refused. Further elaboration as to the study's real purpose was not requested; however, three students did ask "what are you trying to find out?" at the end of their interview. Answers to these questions were general in nature and did not reveal the intended purpose of the interview.

The interviews themselves were semi-structured according to an interview guide designed to elicit specific details rather than to obtain responses to a series of questions. This allowed the interviewer greater flexibility in questioning and the students greater freedom in responding. Sections of the interview guide could be skipped or expanded as necessary in each interview situation. The flexible interview guide led to greater rapport and trust and caused most students to relax and talk freely. The interviews were generally congenial and cordial and varied in length from twenty-five minutes to nearly an hour. The information sought was not of a personal nature and, thus, did not cause a strong reaction or refusal to answer. All of the responses concerning family information, opinions, likes, and dislikes were accepted as given. The responses should be considered as first or superficial reactions to the questions.

THE STUDENTS

The students identified as Appalachian who were included in this study range in age from thirteen to sixteen years old with a mean age of thirteen years and seven months.

TABLE 1

AGE OF STUDENTS

Age	13	14	15	16
tudents	10	7	2	1

The three students who are over age fourteen have repeated two or more grade levels during their school experience.

Five of the students were born in Cincinnati, Ohio, while fifteen were born in Appalachian counties (fourteen in Kentucky, one in Tennessee). Of the 40 parents, 39 were born in Appalachian counties (thirty-seven in Kentucky, two in Tennessee). The birthplace of the fortieth parent was unknown; although, the student reported that he believed that his father, who was deceased, had been born in Kentucky.

TABLE 2

PLACE OF BIRTH -- STUDENTS AND PARENTS

LOCATION	STUDENTS	PARENTS	TOTAL
Bell Co., Ky	4	7	11
Campbell Co., Tenn.	1	2	3
Casey Co., Ky	1	2	3
Clay Co., Ky	2	2	4
Clinton Co., Ky		2	2
Knox Co., Ky		2	2
Laurel Co., Ky	1	3	4
Leslie Co., Ky		5	5
McCreary Co., Ky	3	5	8
Perry Co., Ky	1	2	3
Pulaski Co., Ky	1	2	3
Rockcastle Co., Ky		1	1
Whitley Co., Ky	1	4	5
Hamilton Co., Ohio	5		5
Not Available	—	1	1
TOTAL	20	40	60

A study of the county of birth of the persons born in Appalachia (15 students and 39 parents) reconfirms several earlier studies of migration

streams and patterns.[6] A total of only thirteen separate counties is represented. The fifteen students were born in nine separate counties. By adding the 39 parents, the county total is raised only to thirteen (all located in southcentral Kentucky along the Kentucky-Tennessee border). The parents of all of the children born in Cincinnati were born in one of these Appalachian counties.

On the average, the fifteen students who were born in Appalachia migrated to Cincinnati 8.7 years ago. The range for time since migration to Cincinnati is from one week to twelve and one-half years. Of the students born in Cincinnati, four have lived in the city all of their lives, and one is a classic "shuttle migrant," having moved between Cincinnati and the mountains several times. Most students could not answer the question why their families had migrated to the Cincinnati area. Only four students cited a specific reason for moving to Cincinnati, either "my father was looking for a job" or "my dad got a job in Cincinnati."

In general, the occupations of the student's parents must be classified as unskilled. Few students could say specifically what their parents' occupation was; however, most knew the name of the company and had a general idea of the company's product. The job most often reported for mothers was a waitress. Occupational descriptions for fathers were primarily unskilled such as assembly line work. Two of the fathers, who were carpenters, may be classified as skilled. None of the parents worked in occupations considered professional or managerial.

In terms of family composition, the parents of five students were divorced (four remarried) and one was a widow. All of the students had between one and eight brothers and sisters. The average family size was 4.5 children.

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FAMILY

Children in Family	1	2	3	4	5 or more
Families	0	2	6	3	9

Familism, or a strong loyalty to the family, is a trait that is often attributed to Appalachians. All of the students expressed, or in some way exhibited, a close and strong relationship with their immediate and extended family. When asked what the word family meant, most replied with some phrase that identified their family (e.g., "my brothers and sisters and my dad and mom"). Fourteen of the students made two or more unsolicited comments or remarks about their family. They discussed taking care of brothers and sisters, helping mom or dad, going to market with mom, going hunting with dad, and in one case, when discussing problems at one of the junior high schools, a student remarked "my family is always there to help me."

The patterns of visiting with the extended family further emphasize family ties and loyalty. Visits to family and kin in the mountains are frequent. Only three students had not visited their relatives in the Appalachian counties within the year prior to their interviews. The majority of students had visited their relatives "down home" three or

TABLE 4

NUMBER OF VISITS IN LAST YEAR TO RELATIVES IN APPALACHIAN COUNTY

Number of Visits	0	1 or 2	3 or 4	5 or 6	more often
Students	3	6	6	3	2

more times during the last year. Ten students had stayed with relatives

in Appalachia for a week or longer during the summer of 1972; the longest visit was eight weeks.

A strong sense of loyalty was expressed toward the mountain homeland. When asked if they preferred to live in the Cincinnati area or in the mountains, eleven students expressed an interest in living "down there." One student replied "ya have more room down there, there's not as many people and besides I like to go huntin' and fishin'." Another, a recent migrant, was obviously homesick; "I know everybody down there, there's lots of woods and I stay in the woods most of the time, there's none in the city, it's tough up here. All I ever do here is just set in the house." A third student said, "I like it down there, it's easier down there. There's more room; there's more space; it's peaceful and quiet; it's too hard up here." Throughout the replies to this question, there ran a common theme of peace, quiet, and lots of open space. All three are environmental qualities that obviously are lacking in an urban junior high school.

Frequent visiting among the family continues in the greater Cincinnati area. The students were asked how many times they had visited local relatives within the last month. A majority had visited Cincinnati

TABLE 5

NUMBER OF VISITS IN LAST MONTH TO
RELATIVES IN THE GREATER CINCINNATI AREA

Number of Visits	0	1	2	3	4	more often
Students	1	1	3	2	11	2*

*live on the same street or in the same house.

relatives during the week prior to the interview, and a total of 15 had visited their nearby relatives at least three times within the last month.

Five students reported that close relatives--an uncle, cousin, or grandparent--either lived in the same house or on the same street.

An index of family mobility is the number of elementary schools each student has attended. Of the total, seven students have attended only one elementary school prior to entering junior high school. Eight students have attended three or more elementary schools between kindergarten and the sixth grade. Only two of the thirteen students with multiple elementary

TABLE 6

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS ATTENDED

Number of Schools	1	2	3	4	5	6
Students	7	5	4	2	1	1

school attendance patterns had completed all of the elementary education within the same attendance district as their current junior high school. The remaining eleven attended various elementary schools in several junior high school attendance districts. Six of the thirteen at some time attended an elementary school in Appalachia. Below are examples which typify the multiple elementary school enrollment patterns of the twenty students in this study.

Two Schools

Rothenberg (K-4)
Washington Park (5-6)

Three Schools

Laurel Co., Ky (K)
Whittier (K-3)
Hazel Green, Ky (4-6)

Four Schools

Washington Park (K-1)
Peaslee (2)
Oyler (3-5)
Roosevelt (6)

Six Schools

Windsor, Ky. (K)
Northview (1)
Sharpsburg (2)
Alison (3)
Swifton (4)
Bond Hill (4)
Sharpsburg (5-6)

It is difficult to assess student attitudes toward the school through an interview. Most students responded in a somewhat neutral manner to the question "Do you like school?" Nearly all responded "It's ok" or "It's all right." Only four students expressed either strong pleasure or displeasure toward school. When asked why they liked or disliked school, most students again gave a noncommittal answer, such as "My friends are here," or "It's too hard." Students also responded in a neutral manner to the question "How are you treated in this school?" Only one student did not feel she was treated fairly by the school community. To the question, "What's the greatest problem in this school?," most of the students at Roberts and Norwood could not state a specific problem. The students at Cutter, however, were specific. All of their responses were related either to violence within the school or the mixed racial situation. One girl responded: "The races can't get along with each other in this school. I don't like them jumping on us and fighting." Another young lady responded, "The whites and blacks don't want to associate together." Still another replied, "The kids are always fighting." The differences between Cutter and the other two schools is clearly reflected in these answers.

As for grades, most of the students had earned either a B or C average during their seventh grade year. There were two students with an A average and two who had failed the previous year. A total of eight students repeated at least one grade level during their first seven years of school. In one case, a repeated grade level occurred as the result of a chronic year-long illness.

TABLE 7

SEVENTH GRADE -- GRADE POINT AVERAGE

Average	4.0 - 3.5	3.4 - 2.5	2.4 - 1.6	1.5 - 0	N/A
No. of Students	2	5	10	2	1

TABLE 8

GRADE REPEATED

None	1	2	3 or more
12	5	1	2

The following account by one student describes the problem of repeated grade levels which may occur because of "shuttle migration."

> When we lived in Kentucky, they didn't have no kindergarten and I was in the first grade. When we moved up here I was supposed to be in the second grade but they put me all they way back to kindergarten. Then we went back down home and I was in the third grade. I went all the way to the seventh grade down there and when we came back up here I was supposed to be in the eighth, only they put me back in the seventh. I been here for two years and I failed last year.

Attendance patterns were varied. Only one student had attended every day during the seventh grade, with the majority missing no more than ten days. Three students had been absent more than 30 days during the

TABLE 9

SEVENTH GRADE ATTENDANCE -- DAYS ABSENT

Days Absent	0-10	11-20	21-30	more than 30	N/A
No. of Students	11	4	1	3	1

previous academic year. In attendance patterns, according to the Visiting Teachers at Cutter and Roberts, the Appalachian student generally falls into one of three distinct categories. In the first were the students who attended regularly and were absent only in cases of illness. In the second category were those who attended on a fairly regular basis, but who suddenly were absent for an extended period of time, often two weeks or longer. These students usually returned to school after a home visit by the Visiting Teacher. In the third category were the "no shows," students who never enroll at the beginning of the year and continue to remain outside

the school system indefinitely. Reasons for "no show" vary, but they are related generally to a feeling that education has little or no value. Parental apathy toward education and the schools supports the "no show" in his truancy.

The attitude of Appalachian migrant students toward their teachers must be considered generally good. All of those interviewed expressed favorable feelings toward teachers in general. When asked to describe the type of person they believed made the best teacher, most responded in terms related to friendliness, a good personality, and trust of the student. One student replied that good teachers "have a good sense of humor, are patient, and help you." Another said, "I like teachers who don't yell, who are friendly, who explain the work to you, and who don't act snobbish." A third said, "Good teachers explain the stuff to you. You can go up to them and talk to them and they will explain it to you." One who had repeated several grades replied, "They treat you like a human being. They're nice to you. They give you a break if you prove to them that you're really trying." In responding to a question which asked them to describe a person who was not a good teacher, ten students used the words "yell" or "holler" in their response. One student replied, "I like plain, friendly teachers who do not think that they know it all and who aren't hollering at you all the time." Another indicated that he stayed away from school for several days because one teacher had repeatedly yelled at him in class.

One image of Appalachian students that teachers and counselors often expressed concerns a low occupational aspiration level. The students interviewed in this study generally expressed vague or indefinite job aspirations. Those who did express specific occupational interest were often unrealistic

in their aspiration level. For example, several students who had low grade averages indicated an interest in jobs that require considerable academic preparation (e.g. nurse and biochemist). Of particular interest is the fact that, as a group, the students at Roberts and Norwood did not have well developed job interest. Eight of the fifteen students interviewed at these two schools had not thought about the type of job they might seek upon graduation from high school. Two students expressed interest in careers as professional baseball players and three girls expressed interest as housewives. Only two students had definite career aspirations that seemed realistic. One, an A average student, expressed an interest in veterinary medicine. The second, also a student with high academic achievement, expressed interest in medical technology. In both cases, the students had a clear concept of their career choice and had made appropriate high school and post-high school plans for achieving their goals.

That Appalachians are individualistic and do not join into groups and activities is a consistent theme thoughout the Appalachian culture. Only four of the students interviewed reported any sort of involvement in school extracurricular activities. Three boys participated on athletic teams and one girl worked as an office helper. In discussing this situation with several counselors at Norwood, the writer was informed that all eighth grade students were required to participate in a club or special interest group during a scheduled activity period. None of the Norwood students revealed their participation in these required activities until after they were specifically asked about their involvement. In every case, the students stated that they participated only because they were required to do so.

Just three of the twenty students participated in some form of after-school community group or activity. Once again, sports were dominant. Two participated on athletic teams and the third belonged to a special club at a local Community Center. A fourth student reported he had been a member of the Boy Scouts for a month or so, but that he just couldn't see anything in it.

In general, the students responded neutrally to the question, "How do you feel about blacks?" After further probing, however, most revealed some negative feelings toward blacks. As one might expect, the intensity of the negative responses seemed to be related directly to the amount of daily contact with the black community. At Cutter, most students responded initially with "I like most of them," or "They're all right," or"They're o.k." With further questioning, though, several students added, "I really don't like them," "I don't know why they're so hateful," or "They jump on white kids." When pressed, one student said:

> Well, I think they're all right, even though I don't say nothin' to them, I like them just as friends, but they jump up on me; but I don't never say nothin' to none of them. (Have they ever hurt you?) No, not much; they just done little things, like stab me with a pencil or somethin' like that or pull your hair and kick ya. (What do the teachers do?) I don't know. (Have you told the teacher?) No, only once when they jumped on me up in the lunchroom. (What did you do about that?) Well, I just don't ever go up there any more.

Students at Roberts and Norwood responded initially in similar fashion; "They have just as much right as white people" or "They're all right." When asked if they knew any black students, only those students who had attended elementary schools that were racially mixed replied "yes." There was a definite lack of knowledge and understanding about blacks (thus, a sense of apprehension and mistrust) on the part of most of the Appalachian students.

It may be stated generally that the Appalachian students in this study do not regularly attend a formal church. Just six students indicated they attended church "every Sunday." Several students reported they occasionally attend church, and eight students stated they never or very seldom attend church. This survey should not be taken to indicate that Appalachian students do not possess many of the fundamental religious

TABLE 10

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Very Often	Occasionally	Seldom Attend
6	6	8

beliefs of their heritage. When questioned further about church attendance several expressed the opinion that "You don't have to attend church to believe in God," or "Not goin' to church don't mean you're not religious." When asked about attending church in the mountains, three of the six who seldom attend church said they do attend when visiting back in the mountains.

The self-image of an individual is an important factor in adjustment or coping with a new situation. When asked the meaning of the word "hillbilly," many of the students replied "Somebody from the country," or "Someone from Kentucky." All of the students have been called a "hillbilly" at some time or another. When asked how they felt about being called a hillbilly, most defended and rationalized their feeling with, "It doesn't really bother me," or "It doesn't really mean anything," or "I knew they're kiddin," or "It's just a name, I really didn't think about it." There seemed to be, however, a relationship between the length of time since migration and one's feelings about being called a "hillbilly." A student who had been in Cincinnati for

only a week prior to the interview said:

> Frankly, they don't like us cause we're from down in the country. (Do you think you're a hillbilly?) I think I'm just like anyone else. (Have you ever been called a hillbilly?) Yeah, down where I live, a kid on a bicycle did. (How did you feel about it?) I felt angry. (What did you do about it?) I chased the kid up and down the street.

It is well to reiterate that the data discussed in this paper does not represent a complete and inclusive sample of Appalachian migrant students attending urban schools. While the data is necessary to an understanding of the Appalachian migrant student, only one part of the complex picture is revealed. Hopefully, though, the data will provide some assistance in studying and understanding the total picture.

A PROFILE OF THE APPALACHIAN MIGRANT STUDENT

The following profile of the urban Appalachian student is drawn from the data and information collected, analyzed, and discussed in the proceeding section.

The eighth grade Appalachian migrant student is approximately thirteen and one-half years old and, like his parents, probably was born in a southern Appalachian county. His family migrated to the city the year before he entered kindergarten, and he has attended at least two elementary schools prior to enrolling at the junior high level. There are four brothers and sisters in the family. Both of his parents work, usually at some form of unskilled labor. The student's extended family is large, with relatives living in the urban community and in the mountains. There is much visiting back and forth between relatives, both in the city and "down home." In the last summer vacation, he visited for about two weeks with his grandparents or an aunt and uncle in the mountains.

His attitude toward the school can only be described as neutral. School is required, something that must be endured. He prefers those teachers and administrators who are friendly and personable, those persons he feels he can talk to and trust. In turn, he will be open and friendly, showing respect for those persons who respect him. If placed in an uncompromising or difficult situation by a teacher or administrator, he will tend to withdraw rather than react aggressively or with hostility. (If the situation is too difficult, he just will not show up for school the next day.)

In many respects, he is like any other student. He has average grades and average attendance patterns; however, he normally will not participate in extracurricular activities or join special interest groups. His career goals are vague and indefinite, and he has had very limited job experience.

If he attends a school where there are Blacks, he will not understand the Blacks and will tend to keep to himself or to associate only with other white students. If he is placed in a threatening situation he normally will withdraw, not because he is afraid, but because he does not understand the more aggressive behavior of Black students. If pressed too hard, he simply will take actions to avoid future incidents (such as avoiding the lunchroom, the front hall, or in the extreme situation, quit attending school.)

All in all, the Appalachian migrant student is a unique individual who, remarkably, has learned much about how to cope with the complexities of urban living, but still is far short of what might be termed a satisfactory adjustment in the new social setting. On the other hand, he has managed to maintain much that is positive in his cultural heritage. As a student, he is little understood by his teachers, counselors, and administrators.

CONCLUSION

In many respects, those who attend urban junior high schools, whether Black, Appalachian, or middle-class whites, are very similar. Middle-class whites, though, achieve their goals and obtain services on the basis of the power resulting from their status. Urban minority groups do not operate from the same power base. Over the past decade Blacks have obtained a new level of power because of their growing cultural awareness and willingness to confront those who lead the institutions. Appalachians, for various reasons, do not confront the school and, therefore, often are neglected by the institution. For Blacks, the problem is one of cultural recollection and growth. For Appalachians, it is one of cultural preservation.

Urban school personnel, from decision-makers to classroom teachers, acknowledge pluralism and cultural diversity in American society. However, for the last three decades, the Appalachian migrant has been overlooked in policy decisions and program development. Now second, and even third, generation urban Appalachian children are attending city schools that have little relevance to their way of life. They are children born in the urban community, but who, because of strong family ties, are still very much Appalachian. They are a large, but silent, urban minority.

Appalachians attempt to maintain their heritage in the alien urban setting through their life style. Because they are not in a position of power, Appalachians are unable to preserve, transmit and maintain their heritage through the schools. The question boils down simply to one of preservation. Are the schools going to recognize the Appalachian as a unique and different individual, or are the urban schools going to continue to profess their belief in cultural pluralism, but fail to meet the needs

of a large urban subculture? It is a question to which all of us, whether living in the mountains or in the cities, must address ourselves.

Unless urban educators face up to their responsibilities, urban Appalachian children will continue to lose faith in themselves and respect for their heritage. Increasingly, they will seek answers in the streets rather than in the schools. Honesty, independence, and pride, the essence of their Appalachian heritage, will be lost in the hard, "grab what you can" attitude of the city. Another generation of young people will grow up resenting their heritage and the system that destroyed it. Perhaps, despite the failure of urban schools, their ability to survive in the urban community will be greater than that of their parents. But the price they are forced to pay is high--it is their heritage. And, bit by bit, as urban Appalachians lose their heritage, America loses a distinct and fascinating link to its own.

NOTES

[1]Roscoe Giffin, "From Cinder Hollow to Cincinnati," Mountain Life and Work, (Fall, 1956), p. 4.

[2]That many Appalachian children will choose to avoid the school's neglect by dropping out is further confirmed by Michael Maloney's study of census information in Cincinnati. There are twelve Cincinnati census tracts with and adult dropout rate of more than forty percent. All twelve are predominantly Appalachian. See Michael E. Maloney, The Social Areas of Cincinnati, (Cincinnati: The Cincinnati Human Relations Commission, 1974) pp. 52-54.

[3]These "problems" discussed in interviews with Cincinnati school personnel also are found in Detroit and Chicago. See George Henderson, "Poor Southern Whites: A Neglected Urban Problem," Journal of Secondary Education, (March 1966), pp. 111-114; and Charles Rhodes, "The Appalachian Child in Chicago Schools," Appalachian Advance, (October, 1968), pp. 6-10.

[4]The Cincinnati Public Schools, at the request of Cincinnati's Urban Appalachian Council, recently revised their student data forms to include county of birth for students and parents. By matching this information against a list of Appalachian states and counties it is possible to identify students who are "Appalachian." Preliminary results indicate that nearly thirty-five percent of the students enrolled in Cincinnati Public Schools are Appalachian.

[5]Cincinnati Public Schools, School Information System, Cutter Junior High School, (May, 1972), Cincinnati Public Schools, School Information System, Roberts Junior High School, (May, 1972): David Query, Principal, Norwood Junior High School, Private Interview, (December, 1972).

[6]See James S. Brown, "Population and Migration Changes in Appalachia," in Change in Rural Appalachia,ed. by John D. Photiadis and Harry K. Schwarzweller, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), pp. 37ff; Gary Fowler and Shane Davies "The Urban Residential Location of Disadvantaged White Migrants," Proceedings of the Association of American Geographers, (Vol. 4, 1972), p. 33ff; and Mary B. Harmeling, "Social and Cultural Links in the Urban Occupational Adjustment of Southern Appalachian Migrants." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Fordham University, 1969).